



Farm Center Camp, Borno © UNHCR

Return of Nigerian Refugees

UNHCR, in collaboration with Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) and Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS) has registered a total of 22,092 Nigerian returnees from Cameroon from August 2015 through May 2016. The Cameroonian government has further identified over 67,000 Nigerians who returned from Northern Cameroon mainly at the Fotokol border to Gamboru Ngala, Borno from January through April 2016. In response, the Governor of Borno State has promised to give 2 cars and 5 million Naira to NIS to assist in opening the Cameroonian border post with Borno within a month. NIS, in collaboration with UNHCR, will shortly commence the registration of returnees at the Fotokol border point.

The Government of Cameroon has shared a draft tripartite agreement with the Government of Nigeria. A Regional Protection Dialogue, supported by UNHCR, is planned for 6-10 June 2016, to take place in Abuja, which will bring together officials from the four Lake Chad Basin countries to discuss critical protection issues including regional durable solutions. The Regional Protection Dialogue will inform discussions over tripartite agreements with Lake Chad Basin States as a mechanism for advocacy on issues such as safe, voluntary and dignified return and international standards relating to forced return and determination of conditions conducive to voluntary repatriation.

Law and Policy

On the 9 – 10 May, in collaboration with and funding from UNHCR, a two-day public hearing was held in the House of Representatives on a Bill for an Act to establish a Northeast Development Commission, which would have responsibilities including the rehabilitation and reconstruction of roads, houses, business premises of victims of insurgency, as well as the reintegration of IDPs. The hearing was held by the House Representatives Committee on Refugees, IDPs and Northeast Initiatives, which was created following successful advocacy on the part of UNHCR, and presided over by Honorable Sani Zorro, Chairman of the Committee.

Protection Assessments

Assessment of Newly Accessible Areas: To follow up on the initial identification of severe protection issues in newly accessible areas by the recent multi-sector assessment, UNHCR has commenced leading a comprehensive Borno Protection Sector Working Group (PSWG) assessment in Damboa and Dikwa. The assessment plans to cover Bama and Monguno, subject to security approval.

Rapid Protection Assessment in Maiduguri: Due to the need to the lack of a comprehensive protection assessment in camps and host communities in Maiduguri, the rapid protection assessment was expanded to cover all 12 Maiduguri camps, as well as some of the host communities, to obtain a full picture of the scale of protection issues. UNHCR assessed 6 camps and 2 host communities on May 10, with data collection ongoing.

The office shared the protection findings of the multi-sector joint assessment to the Boko Haram Task Force in New York as well as to the IASC Regional Meeting in Dakar.

UNHCR is leading a return survey in Yobe State to determine whether IDPs have started to return to their areas of origin. The return survey indicates that 592 people have returned to their Local Government Areas (LGA) of origin from host community areas.

In his opening address, Hon. Zorro noted the severity of the displacement crisis and that more needs to be done to meet the vast needs of IDPs in host communities which have never been reached by authorities, as well as in camps. Hon. Zorro further stated that while the country seems eager to return IDPs back to their places of origin, the conditions are not ripe to do so. The Deputy Chairman of the Committee thanked UNHCR for its continued support to the Committee. If created, the Commission will strengthen the coordination in the North East and support durable solutions for displacement.

Protection Coordination

UNHCR in collaboration with International Federation Women Lawyers (FIDA) visited the Adamawa State Comptroller of Prisons to request access to the prison facilities in order to conduct prison visits to detained IDPs and be able to assess their cases.

With a view to facilitating frequent contact and collaboration with IDP leadership and camp managers, UNHCR conducted site visits in Malkohi, Fufore and NYSC camps in Adamawa. A total of 6,406 IDPs are currently in formal Adamawa camps, breaking down as follows: Fufore camp - 2,769, Malkohi camp - 1,268 and NYSC camp - 2,369.

Following advocacy by UNHCR to the military authorities to establish a Civil-Military Coordination unit, which the military had since established, the inaugural meeting of the Civil Military Coordination Forum was held on 5 May 2016 at Lafya Dole HQ Theatre in Maiduguri. Humanitarian security advisers and Nigerian Military Civil liaison officers agreed to meet every Thursday of the week to exchange information about security developments in Borno State.

UNHCR, as co-lead of the Protection Sector Working Group (PSWG), worked closely with UNICEF and UNFPA to develop concept notes for a rapid Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) protection proposal. The following activities are proposed in the CERF concept notes to be implemented by UNHCR:

- Profiling and identification of civilians with protection needs in the newly accessible areas: To improve its accessibility as well as the sustainability of the program in newly accessible areas, UNHCR and partners will set up monitoring mechanisms in areas that are currently completely devoid of such systems, targeting 250,000 persons.
- Provision of psycho-social support: psychological first aid and psychosocial support is critical to mitigate the horrific abuses that IDPs have undergone at the hands of Boko Haram, including abductions, witnessing grave violence to family members, rape and sexual abuse, forced marriage and forced religious conversions.
 - CERF will be used to implement a time-critical provision of psycho-social support services to those who have undergone severe psychosocial distress, including those who have witnessed severely distressing events and survivors of rape and sexual abuse.
- Setting up Community-Based Protection Mechanisms and Maintaining the Civilian Character of IDP sites: It is critical to swiftly work within the displaced communities to identify IDP leaders and enable them to transfer management and leadership within sites from military to community-based mechanisms. This will promote the maintenance of the civilian and humanitarian character of displaced sites and minimize potentially harmful civilian exposure to military which raises the potential for exploitation and other risks.

In addition, UNFPA plans to implement comprehensive SGBV intervention, while UNICEF proposed identification of unaccompanied and separated children and reintegration of children associated with Boko Haram.

UNHCR led the consolidation of PSWG member activities, as well as drafting of sectoral response and needs for the OCHA Humanitarian Dashboard for April 2016. The sector identified the following needs:

- Many areas particularly in Borno state have been subject to extensive infrastructural damage and remain inaccessible to humanitarian actors with ongoing incidents of insurgency and severely curtailed access to basic services and livelihood opportunities. There is a concerted need to promote international standards concerning return, including that it is only appropriate when voluntary, safe and dignified.
- Mine risk education should be scaled up and targeted to address the particular vulnerability of children in projected return movements. There is a further need to promote family reunification for unaccompanied and separated children who face profuse protection risks.
- There is a need to strengthen identification and provision of psychosocial support and reintegration programmes to marginalized groups such as conflict affected children and women and girls who have been subject to sexual and gender-based violence and often face stigma and cultural barriers to reporting incidents of abuse.

Shelter Interventions

UNHCR has completed two communal shelter units at NYSC Camp in Maiduguri to respond to vast shelter needs brought on by recent heavy rainfall. Construction of two other communal shelters to replace burnt tents in Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) camp that led to IDPs sleeping in the open is ongoing, with 90% completion rate. Another 180 shelter frame structures are completed in Bakassi Camp in Maiduguri and are waiting for plastic sheets to cover internal and external walls.



NYSC Camp, Borno © UNHCR



Mogolis Camp, Borno © UNHCR

Material Protection-based Assistance

Protection-based material assistance includes provisions of non-food items, including solar lanterns and dignity kits for vulnerable women/girls. All assistance is targeted to the most vulnerable displaced as identified through the household level vulnerability screening in Round I.

In furtherance of the recent collaborative efforts by UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) on cash-based interventions, UNHCR in Borno State issued tokens to 187 IDPs for WFP cash program consideration.

In order to map beneficiaries of livelihood support for crop production and livestock production in Taraba State, UNHCR, in coordination with the Taraba State Emergency Management Agency and Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (VSF), facilitated focus group discussions in 8 IDP locations in Jalingo and Ardo Kola LGAs.

Refugee Operations

UNHCR on the 10th of May registered 14 individual asylum seekers of 7 families, originating from Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Central African Republic and Eritrea.

UNHCR identified 3 refugees of Nigerian nationality who had been registered in Cameroon. 2 of the refugees are in Borno and 1 is in Adamawa. UNHCR is continuously monitoring potential presence of refugees from Niger in the North East, including in Borno and Yobe States.

Vulnerability Screening

Following successful completion of Round I of the vulnerability screening exercise conducted by UNHCR, in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs) and Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS), in December 2015 for all North East States, Round II of the vulnerability screening data collection commenced in March 2016 in all six North East States with the view to expand the coverage of host communities and areas beyond the over 17,000 households reached in Round I. The objective of the vulnerability screening exercise is to profile the most vulnerable internally displaced at the household and individual level in order to direct assistance to the most vulnerable IDPs by UNHCR and partner agencies, as well as inform the planning of targeted protection interventions. All data collection for Round II of the exercise was completed by the end of April and data entry is currently ongoing.

Capacity Building

Following successful advocacy visits to the Police in Borno State to include female Police Officers in IDP related activities, UNHCR, IRC and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in Maiduguri conducted a comprehensive protection training session to 60 female police officers from 25 April to 6 May 2016. The training was geared to build the capacity of the female officers to respond to sensitive female IDPs cases, especially relating to sexual and gender based violence.